

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, IS, JO, EG
SUBJECT: WEST BANK REACTION TO EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS

1. SUMMARY: INITIAL PALESTINIAN EDITORIAL
REACTION TO EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS
ON WEST BANK/GAZA HAS RANGED FROM IMPATIENT INDIFFERENCE
TO HOSTILE SUSPICION. WHILE MODERATES ARE WILLING TO GRANT
SADAT TACTICAL FLEXIBILITY, NATIONALISTS CRITICIZE HIM FOR
IGNORING THE PLO AND SUSPECT HE MEANS TO SPLIT
PALESTINIAN RANKS. "AL FAJR" SUGGESTS SADAT TAKE A LESSON
FROM "TIME" MAGAZINE. ALL ARE SURE ISRAEL WON'T BUDGE.
SUBSEQUENT REPORTS FROM VIENNA HIGHLIGHT EGYPTIAN WILLINGNESS
TO CEDE WEST BANK LAND--A POSSIBILITY REJECTED ADAMANTLY
BY EVEN THE MODERATES. END SUMMARY

2. EAST JERUSALEM ARABIC PRESS REPORTED PROMINENTLY EGYPTIAN
PROPOSALS FOR WEST BANK/GAZA, INCLUDING THE TEXT, AND
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PAGE 02 JERUSA 01901 110733Z

EDITORIALISTS QUICKLY COMMENTED JULY 6.

3. "AL QUDS" (MODERATE AND PRO-JORDANIAN) ACCORDED SADAT
FLEXIBILITY IN PURSUING PRINCIPLES OF COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL
AND PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION. BRUSHING ASIDE CONSPICUOUS
ABSENCE OF PLO IN EGYPTIAN SUGGESTIONS, "AL QUDS" MAINTAINED
"PRIORITY OF ENDING OCCUPATION ... BY WHATEVER MEANS."

4. IN CONTRAST, "AL FAJR" (PRO-PLO) AND "ASH'AB" (INDEPENDENT) RAPPED SADAT FOR IGNORING PLO AND NOT TREATING PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AS AN ENTITY. THE TRANSITION PERIOD UNDER JORDANIAN AND EGYPTIAN RULE IS DESIGNED, ACCORDING TO "AL FAJR", TO "CIRCUMVENT PALESTINIAN ASPIRATIONS FOR AN INDEPENDENT STATE, SOMETHING TO WHICH EVEN THAT THE AMERICAN "TIME" MAGAZINE DOES NOT FAIL TO REFER."

5. ALL EDITORIALISTS ASSUMED ISRAEL WOULD REJECT SADAT'S PROPOSALS AND DOUBTED THAT THE AMERICANS COULD BUDGE ISRAEL SIGNIFICANTLY. "WHEN WILL THIS BORING RECORD END? "WHAT USE GOOD INTENTIONS...AGAINST THE ROCK OF ISRAELI REJECTION?" "AL QUDS" ASKED.

6. SUBSEQUENT REPORTS FROM VIENNA JULY 9 HIGHLIGHTED SADAT'S ALLEGED WILLINGNESS TO APPROVE MINOR BORDER MODIFICATIONS AND PROVOKED A HARDER LINE BY MODERATES. "...WE RESIDENTS OF THE WEST BANK REJECT BARGAINS INVOLVING OUR LAND ON THE PRETEXT OF 'MINOR MODIFICATIONS.' WITH ALL DUE RESPECT TO PRESIDENT SADAT, WE HAVE NOT DELEGATED ANYONE TO PUT OUR LAND UP FOR AUCTION IN THE ARENA OF POLITICAL MANEUVERS," "AL QUDS" WROTE.

7. COMMENT. IN PRIVATE, LOCAL PALESTINIANS WE HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 JERUSA 01901 110733Z

TALKED TO, SUCH AS ANWAR NUSEIBEH AND MAYOR MULHIM, HAVE INITIALLY TENDED TO DISMISS EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE OF INTRINSIC FALTS, BUT RATHER BECAUSE THEY SEE NO ISRAELI WILLINGNESS TO BUDGE ON WITHDRAWAL AND DOUBT U.S. ABILITY AND/OR DESIRE TO MAKE THEM BUDGE. THE SILVER LINING IN THIS BLACK CLOUD OF DESPAIR IS THAT EXPECTATIONS ARE, AT LEAST, REALISTIC. EDITORIAL REACTIONS UNDERSCORE PALESTINIAN SOLIDARITY ON QUESTIONS OF LAND AND WITHDRAWAL AND DIVERGENCE ON QUESTIONS OF PLO AND FORMS OF SELF-DETERMINATION.
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